

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 MCT-01 OMB-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 /078 W

-----110948 190842Z /20

R 190715Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2488

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, RP

SUBJECT: MNLF AND PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES AGREED TO JOINT
OPERATIONS

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES AND MNLF
AGREED JULY 15 TO CONDUCT JOINT OPERATIONS AGAINST GROUPS OF
BANDITS AND PIRATES WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN ENDEMIC IN
SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. THE AGREEMENT, REACHED BY ARMED FORCES
AND MNLF REPRESENTATIVES IN MANILA, ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH MOST
PRESSING CURRENT CEASEFIRE PROBLEM. PIRACY AND BANDITRY,
PROFESSIONS WITH LONG IF NOT HONORABLE HISTORIES IN THE SOUTHERN
PHILIPPINES, HAVE AGAIN BECOME SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR LAW ABIDING
RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES PROVINCES. EXTRA-LEGAL
ACTIVITIES OF THESE GROUPS ALSO POSE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS
PROBLEM FOR THE CEASEFIRE SINCE MANY MILITARY OFFICERS BELIEVE
THAT MNLF IS USING BANDITRY AS COVER FOR OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS.

2. DURING RECENT VISIT OF CHARGE TO PHILIPPINE ARMED

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FORCES SOUTHERN COMMAND (SEPTEL), DEPUTY COMMANDER
SOUTHCOM STATED HE HAD INVITED MNLF TO PARTICIPATE IN
GOVERNMENT DRIVE AGAINST BANDITS BUT THAT MNLF HAD REFUSED
OFFER. AT THAT TIME GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO MOVE ALONE
AGAINST BANDITS. MILITARY ADMITTED DIFFICULTY OF
DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN REAL BANDITS AND MNLF, BUT WERE
INTENT ON PROCEEDING DESPITE RISKS OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

3. COMMENT: SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT FORCES AND MNLF SHOULD LESSEN THE PROBABILITY OF INCIDENTS ARISING OUT OF IDENTITY ERRORS. IF JOINT OPERATIONS DO SUCCEED, THEY COULD HELP ENTRENCH THE CEASEFIRE EVEN FURTHER. THE RISKS, HOWEVER, OF BRINGING TOGETHER TWO GROUPS OF HEAVILY ARMED OPPONENTS ARE VERY REAL. UNLESS BOTH SIDES PROCEED WITH CAUTION THEY MAY CREATE MORE PROBLEMS THAN THEY CAN SOLVE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Format: TEL
From: MANILA
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Litigation History:
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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Secure: OPEN
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